

critically needed services to women all across this country.

I am also committed to dispelling the left's malicious lies about ectopic pregnancies in the aftermath of the Dobbs decision. As someone who understands the science and practiced obstetrics for over 25 years and, frankly, treated hundreds of women with ectopic pregnancies, I want to state that I agree with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. We always have and always will support the treatment of women suffering from the always-life-threatening condition of an ectopic pregnancy. The radical activists, who wildly claim ectopic pregnancies will be left untreated because of this Court decision, are simply misinformed and dangerously practice fearmongering tactics. For a physician to not treat ectopic pregnancies would be, No. 1, unethical, as well as, No. 2, below the standard of care for every community in America.

Let me close by saying once again, thanks to all of you, the tens of thousands of Americans who participated in the 50th March for Life, for courageously and tirelessly fighting for life. Each and every one of you is my encouragement. You give me the strength and hope to wake up every day and join my fellow pro-life Senators and millions of pro-life Americans to fight to protect the sanctity of life. Your being here, praying together, marching side by side, arm to arm, you strengthen my resolve, and you can count on me to tirelessly fight to defend and secure the right to life for all human beings.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues in a discussion about the right to life and what happened last week in Washington, DC, when tens of thousands of Americans of all ages, races, and religious backgrounds traveled to our Nation's Capitol to march for life.

This March for Life was particularly special since it was the first March for Life after the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, which made this march a special celebration recognizing the unborn lives saved as a result of that decision.

I was proud to see many North Carolinians represent our State in the march by participating and fighting for the young babies who do not have a voice. But for the voices expressed in the March for Life, they would be unheard.

In January 1974, a brave group of committed pro-life leaders led the first March for Life to advocate for a solution to the Supreme Court's judicial activism, in my opinion, in the Roe v. Wade case.

This year, the March for Life was not only an event to advocate for the unborn, it was a celebration of the end of Roe and the return of pro-life policy-

making to the States and, I believe, to the Congress.

The Dobbs decision is historic and affirms my belief that all life is sacred. Each State government and its duly elected representatives now make the determination about what types of laws they wish to have in place. I, for one, continue to advocate for commonsense measures that the majority of Americans support, like protecting life at crucial points of development and prohibiting horrendous procedures like partial-birth abortion.

While it is good for us to celebrate the Dobbs decision, as Senators, we must remember that the fight for life in the United States is far from finished. Our work to enact pro-life policies must continue if we are to be a voice for the voiceless.

I believe Congress must vigorously pursue efforts to defend the sanctity of life. Some have said since the Dobbs decision that this is something that only States should weigh into, and I respectfully disagree.

Just 2 weeks ago, I was thrilled to see the House pass the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, which I am committed to supporting. This legislation would protect newborns who survive failed abortions, born alive, requiring the same degree of care as a newborn baby. I urge Leader SCHUMER to bring this commonsense bill up to the floor for a vote as soon as possible.

Last Congress, I cosponsored dozens of pro-life bills. This Congress, I joined multiple bills to shape Federal policies toward protecting life. This includes proposals that would prohibit the use of Federal funds for abortion and prohibit Planned Parenthood from using Federal funding for abortions.

When I served as speaker of the house in North Carolina, we passed several bills to protect the unborn and to defend life, and it was widely supported by the diverse State of North Carolina, which is by no means a red State. It is a blue State, maybe a purple State. But when you talk about what we were trying to accomplish, the majority of North Carolinians supported it.

I ultimately believe that the States are best situated to set policies to support mothers and to protect life. That is why it is critical that pro-life advocates contact their State legislators and their Governors to ensure that life-saving protections are enacted to defend the unborn in their respective States.

I am committed to continuing the effort to support life. I am a lifetime pro-life Catholic. I make no apology for it because we are the voice in the absence of that baby yet to be born, and we have to continue to fight for them. I encourage my Senate colleagues to join me in doing this.

Mr. President, I just want to say that I hope that on this issue, like so many that we tackled in the last Congress, thorny issues, that everybody thought nothing could get done—I really hope

that we can get people in a room and recognize that we can come together on some basic tenets, get rid of the voices at either end of the spectrum that are preventing us from making progress on this important issue, because, literally, the lives of the unborn—their lives, their opportunity is at stake.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, thank you for your leadership and your desire to continue to lead in our country.

Everything I do here, everything that most of us do here, I think, should come back to the dignity of work—the idea that hard work should pay off for everyone, no matter who you are, no matter whether you punch a clock or swipe a badge, no matter if you are management or labor, no matter if you are self-employed, where you live, what kind of work you do. When work has dignity—by definition, the “dignity of work,” brought to us originally by Leo XIII, “the labor Pope” of 120 years ago—with the Presiding Officer's faith, he knows about Leo XII—and brought to us by Dr. King—when work has dignity, people have a secure retirement. It means you count on Social Security and Medicare. It means we protect people's pensions. It means the VA continues paying benefits that you earned if you were exposed to Agent Orange or to these massive football field-size burn pits. It means people make enough money for retirement and for a rainy day.

It is why in this body, just 2 years ago—in March, slightly fewer than 2 years ago—we saved the pensions of 100,000 Ohioans, tens of thousands in Virginia, a million around the country, people who worked their whole lives. They earned the pension and the peace of mind in retirement for themselves and their families.

Think about what that means.

It is why we are still fighting for the Delphi retirees who, again, lost their pensions through no fault of theirs. It is why we will always—always, always—fight back against attacks on Social Security, attacks on Medicare, and efforts to privatize the Veterans' Administration.

A secure retirement should never be a partisan issue. On August 14, 1935, President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act. Ever since that time, it should not—it was partisan then. Most Democrats were for it, and most Republicans were, I will just say, less for it. But it has become a partisan issue far too often.

Social Security and Medicare are two of the most popular, most unifying institutions of the country. It is our government's promise to working men and women, a promise that they will be able to retire with dignity. You pay in every paycheck—twice a month, whatever—and you are guaranteed that benefit.

Support for Social Security cuts across party lines. It cuts across racial lines. It cuts across geographic lines. Americans not only want to protect Social Security and Medicare—that goes without saying, although many of my colleagues want to undermine it—but they want to make these programs stronger.

But that is what Republicans—I don't want to make this into a partisan issue, but it has been, unfortunately. It is not what the Republicans in Congress want to do.

I want every American to understand that Republicans in Congress are planning to hold your Social Security hostage. They have done it several different ways over the years. So let's talk about it today.

They have threatened not to raise the debt limit. Raising the debt limit sounds complicated and sounds expensive. It is not. Raising the debt limit, said another way, is about paying our bills, paying the bills our Nation owes and keeping our word. We did this three times under Donald Trump with no drama. Their refusal to pay our bills undermines U.S. global leadership.

For seniors, it would be a disaster. It means that Social Security checks would stop going out. It would mean that seniors won't get their Social Security checks if we don't keep our promises and pay our bills. It is the first way this year that Republicans will attack Social Security.

Second, they want to take this country and the American economy to the brink of default and then leverage their fiscal lunacy to cut your Social Security. Ten years ago, 15 years ago, Republicans didn't act this way. It is this new—just going down the hall here, you can see the other place, the place where the other ones work. The people who are the most extreme in that body clearly are trying to bring this country to the brink. They are willing to take the U.S. economy hostage and only agree to pay our bills—bills we have all run up, including a huge part of that with President Trump and the Republican Congress with the big tax cut giveaway to the richest people in this country—they are willing to take the economy hostage and raise the debt limit if Congress cuts Social Security. The only way they are going to pay their bills is if Congress cuts Social Security. That is what they are saying.

Let that sink in. Congressional Republicans intend to use the fact that we need to pay our bills, pay our bills that already have accrued—to pay our bills is their tool for cutting Social Security. You might disguise their policy as a commission. Every time you hear the word “commission” and then they describe the next part of the sentence to reform Social Security, you know what it means. Their plan is to leverage this: We are going to not pay our bills to cut your Social Security.

Finally, there is privatizing Social Security. The details differ. The terms may change, but the goal is the same:

to kill off Social Security by shrinking it and privatizing it and undermining public support.

It doesn't matter if you voted for this Republican or that Republican who sits at these desks or Senator CASEY or Senator WYDEN or Senator KAINE. Overwhelmingly, people who go to the polls and vote support Social Security and don't want Social Security privatized.

What is happening is nothing less than an attempt to go back on the bedrock promise made to America's middle class that Social Security would be there for them.

On August 14, 1935, Franklin Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act. In 1940 or 1941, for a woman in New Hampshire, I think her first check was \$24. I believe she was a retired schoolteacher and got the first Social Security check.

It doesn't matter to them, to Social Security beneficiaries, about all the politics here. But we know that for Social Security checks, people paid into the program their whole entire working lives. Our government should work for people who paid into Social Security, not against them.

When work has dignity, we honor the retirement security people earned. I urge my Republican colleagues in this body—colleagues, I point out, with healthcare and retirement plans; all of us with healthcare and retirement plans paid for by taxpayers—our retirements aren't at risk. Why should it be for Social Security beneficiaries? None of my colleagues over here are saying: Let's privatize the retirement system for Members of Congress.

They never say that. They say: Let's privatize Social Security. Let's privatize the Veterans' Administration in Richmond or Cleveland or Cincinnati. Let's privatize Medicare.

They never talk about privatizing their benefits.

But think about the generations of Americans who have benefited from Social Security and the generations to come relying on the promise of Social Security and Medicare.

For the last part of my remarks, Mr. President, I introduced a resolution affirming the Senate's commitment, last year, to protecting and expanding Social Security.

Dozens of my colleagues got on this bill, including, I believe, the Presiding Officer—a resolution affirming the Senate's commitment to protecting and expanding Social Security. But you know what? Not one Republican signed onto this resolution; not one re-committed to the promise of the American people that if you work hard all of your life, Social Security will be there for you.

What is more American, what is more basic, what is more family-oriented than: I pay into Social Security my whole life, I pay into Medicare, and if I get prematurely sick or disabled or when I retire, why would we not honor that commitment? Why do some Mem-

bers of Congress want to privatize this program? Because we know what happens when they are privatized. The investors come in, the banks come in and end up undermining it, and there is less dollars—fewer dollars available and less public support.

Americans shouldn't have to worry that politicians secure with government pensions are going to try to take away their retirement benefits that they earn. I will again introduce that resolution—probably next month—affirming the Senate's commitment to protecting and expanding Social Security, opposed to privatization.

I will again ask all my colleagues to sign on. I assume we will get many. I am hopeful this time—hopeful—that some Republicans join us. Republican seniors in Ohio would support it. It is just, their elected officials so often don't.

People shouldn't have to worry if politicians who put our entire economy at risk by using this debt limit fight—this “are we going to pay our bills or not” fight—to cut social security, but here we are.

I urge my colleagues to do the patriotic duty to raise the debt limit, without condition, without threatening economic calamity. And I ask that you work with us to do what the American people overwhelmingly want: protect and expand Social Security and Medicare and VA benefits.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Georgia.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S.J. RES. 4 and H.R. 22

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I understand that there are two measures at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the measures by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 4) removing the deadline for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

A bill (H.R. 22) to prohibit the Secretary of Energy from sending petroleum products from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to China, and for other purposes.

Mr. WARNOCK. I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. The measures will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d-276g, as amended, appoints the following Senator as Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group conference during the 118th Congress: the Honorable AMY KLOBUCHAR of Minnesota.